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23 November 1966

EASTERN EUROPE

- I. The Communist regimes of Eastern Europe other than Albania have been for several years undergoing an evolution characterized by development of a unique form of national, and in the case of Rumania, neutralist, Communism.
 - A. As a result, the relationship between Eastern Europe and the USSR has become that of a loose commonwealth bound together by practical politics and a common basic ideology.
 - B. The USSR has adjusted its methods of dealing with Eastern Europe to accept this commonwealth relationship.
 - C. On any given question, the Eastern European countries have a wide range of sometimes conflicting views reflecting their individual national interests.
 - D. The main question facing the Eastern European regimes today is how to protect and advance their national interests within the framework of the international Communist movement.

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II. The Sino-Soviet dispute has presented the Eastern European regimes the particularly vexing problem of how to maintain an image of unity in the Communist movement while pursuing their respective national aspirations.

A. The intransigence of the Communist Chinese has led most of the regimes to follow the Soviet lead of attempting to isolate China as to make it an outcast among the Communist countries, but some parties have resisted.

B. The recent Bulgarian party congress was used to raise again the issue of an international conference of Communist parties with the implied purpose of expelling China from the movement.

1. Bulgaria and Hungary gave full support to the idea while Czechoslovakia gave reluctant support only after "broad exchanges of opinion" had paved the way.

2. East Germany demonstrated less than full endorsement, and Poland side-stepped the issue entirely, thereby indicating its reserve in associating with a move designed to widen the split.

3. Predictably, Rumania, which has successfully established its neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute, implicitly opposed a conference.

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- III. The Vietnam war, on the other hand, has presented the East European regimes with an issue on which they feel compelled to support the Soviet position and condemn the Chinese.
- A. All the Eastern European leaders except the Rumanians and the Albanians have condemned the Chinese for placing obstacles in the way of prosecuting the war from a position of unified strength.
- B. Nevertheless, the East Europeans apparently desire an end to the conflict because of fear of an expanded war, the desire not to become more embroiled in the present one, and their desire to get on with an East-West detente.
- IV. In spite of the Vietnam war and a rather vicious anti-US propaganda campaign, the Eastern European regimes have generally continued efforts to expand their relations with the West.
- A. This has been true particularly in the area of trade.
- B. In one significant exception, the recent seizure in Prague of a Czech-born US citizen from a Soviet airliner has precipitated a serious crisis in US-Czechoslovak relations.

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C. A trend toward political rapprochement between some Eastern European countries and West Germany may soon result in the establishment of diplomatic relations.

1. Rumania is moving the fastest, with Bulgaria watching closely and Hungary probably willing to follow.
2. Even the Czechs and Poles are privately moderating their anti-German positions to some degree and might make peace with Bonn if it satisfies some of their conditions.

V. The resurgence of national interest as a guiding force in East European affairs means there are few if any valid generalizations that can be made about domestic problems in the area.

A. Since 1957, Poland's Gomulka has gradually curbed extremists from both the right and left within his party, and the party majority now hews to a relatively circumscribed conservative-centrist line.

1. This line, however, is subject to an undercurrent of factional infighting, designed not so much to displace the party leader as to influence his policies.
2. The Polish regime fully supports all Soviet foreign policies, though at times with indigenous nuances.

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3. The Poles fear a resurgent Germany and will work against its reunification.
 4. Warsaw still clings to several of its own plans for the neutralization of central Europe as the best guarantee of its security.
- B. Although Czechoslovakia party leadership remains essentially conservative, the party leader, Novotny, has cautiously committed himself to a far-reaching economic reform program, at the risk of intraparty friction.
- C. The Hungarian regime in spite of persistent problems in industry and agriculture, has been stabilized in recent years by its policy of national reconciliation which has won a measure of support from the populace.
- D. The situation in East Germany is admittedly one of "forced stability," leaving the regime--always sensitive to popular criticism and concerned about overt dissidence--to launch a campaign appealing to populace nationalism.
- E. Although Rumania is still one of the most politically and economically controlled countries domestically, its leadership nevertheless has attained popular support for its independent policies in foreign affairs.
- F. The recent Bulgarian party congress consolidated the power of party boss Todor Zhivkov,

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and may mark the beginning of a new
era of economic and cultural liberalization.

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